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MEMORANDUM

TO: Child Care Providers
FROM: Crystal Arbour, Child Care Services Program Manager
DATE: March 23, 2020
TIME: 4:00pm
SUBJECT: Child Care Provider Advisory

SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS OCFS RESPONDS TO RAPIDLY CHANGING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Maine's children and families. The state is at a critical point in the COVID-19 crisis and needs your help, more than ever, to weather this storm. Across the country child care programs have become a critical part of the COVID-19 response efforts. The continued operation of child care programs at whatever level possible in communities throughout the state is key to keeping critical services operating and supporting working families, including essential health care, law enforcement and first responders. We also recognize and respect those who have decided they cannot keep their programs open and are not currently working.

As you make decisions regarding your operations, the Office of Child and Family Services asks that you please take the following into consideration:

- Is there a need to charge parents fees for a child not currently attending? Or could a reduced fee be considered to hold their child care slot?
- If children are not attending the child care program and their child care slot is being temporarily filled by another child, the Office of Child and Family Services does not believe it is appropriate to charge a fee to the parents of the child not attending.
- Some providers have asked if their staff could qualify for unemployment. If you have questions regarding unemployment, please see the following resource:
<https://www.maine.gov/labor/>

Reminders and other information:

- If you are a current Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) provider and are not operating, enrolled children are considered to have an excused absence. Should that child enroll in child

care elsewhere, the CCSP can only pay one child care provider at a time and the payments for that child would be transferred to the new provider.

- Staff for whom you have not completed a background check must ALWAYS be supervised until the background check is completed and the results are deemed satisfactory.
- Current CCSP rules define an “In-Home Child Care Provider” as a License-Exempt Child Care Provider who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, a Maine resident, and provides Child Care Services to no more than two (2) Children in the Child’s home. CCSP will approve, on a case-by-case basis, In-Home Child Care Providers to care for more than 2 children that are siblings.

There is still a need for child care for many first responders, health care professionals, public health staff, essential state employees, and retail workers. In line with that need, we continue to work on a case by case basis to temporarily increase capacity and emergency license providers. Please contact your Licensing Specialist for more information.

We continue to support each individual child care provider’s choice to close or remain open. For those remaining open, we will continue to provide guidance and resources to promote the health and safety of children, families, and communities. OCFS encourages you to continue to reference guidance from the following resources:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- The Maine Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus.shtml>
- State of Maine Child and Family Services
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/COVID-19-response.shtml>